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13 rejected. For candidates who fail to pass the form vision test no appeal is provided, but they are allowed to be re-examined at intervals of three months. Twelve candidates out of the 115 who failed to pass the form vision test have been subsequently passed. The number of officers already in possession of certificates of competency who on coming up for examination failed to pass the tests was 53; 4 masters, 5 mates and 15 second mates failing in colors, and 1 master, 12 mates and 16 second mates in form vision. No case of failure to pass the test for color ignorance has been reported.

*Natural Science* states that two marsupials (*Dasyuroides byrnei*, n.g. et sp., and *Sminthopsis larapinta*, n. sp.) were discovered by the Horn expedition in central Australia, and are described by Prof. Baldwin Spencer in the *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Victoria*, vol. viii., pp. 5-13, as well as further described and figured in the account of the Horn expedition. *Dasyuroides* is a burrowing, insectivorous marsupial of nocturnal habits, which in the general form of the body closely resembles a large *Phascogale* or a small *Dasyurus*, while its dentition is also like that of those species of *Phascogale* which approach *Dasyurus*. The skull, on the other hand, agrees with that of *Sminthopsis* in the character of the nasal bones, while the hind foot in shape and in the absence of a hallux differs from that of both *Phascogale* and *Sminthopsis*. The specimens on which the description is based consist of six males and one female, and the dimensions of an adult male in alcohol are: Head and body, 182 mm.; tail, 130 mm.; ear, 18 mm.; hind foot, 38 mm. The new *Sminthopsis* is a small mouse-like form, separated from the two known species, *S. murina* and *S. crassicaudata*, by a long, very stout and highly incrassated tail, and by the greater relative length of the hind foot.

#### UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NEWS.

PROF. C. S. BROWN, of the Rose Polytechnic Institute, Terre Haute, Ind., has been elected adjunct professor of mechanical engineering in Vanderbilt University in place of Prof. William T. Magruder, who goes to the Ohio State University.

MISS MARY F. WINSTON, of Chicago University, has received the degree of Ph. D. *magnum cum laude*, at Göttingen University. Miss Winston is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin and subsequently studied at the University of Chicago. She is said to be the second woman to receive the degree of Ph. D. from a German university.

MR. G. F. STOUT, Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, and editor of *Mind*, has been appointed to the Anderson lectureship on comparative psychology, recently founded at Aberdeen.

THE *Lancet* states that the Council of University College, Liverpool, have nominated Dr. H. E. Annett to a scholarship of the value of £150 a year, tenable for three years, awarded by the Commissioners of the 1851 Exhibition for further researches in scientific subjects and scientific study. Dr. Annett has given an undertaking to the Commissioners to proceed to one or more of the large Continental colleges where facilities exist for carrying on the study of pathology and bacteriology.

PROF. LIONEL S. BEALE has resigned the chair of medicine at King's College and the office of physician to King's College Hospital. Prof. F. Jeffrey Bell has also resigned the chair of comparative anatomy which he has filled for seventeen years.

A CHEMICAL dyeing school for instruction and research has been built at Crefeld under the auspices of the German government at a cost of about \$100,000.

#### DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE.

THE NAMES EPIPHYSIS, CONARIUM AND CORPUS PINEALE: CORRECTION OF AN ERROR.

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: In your publication, July 17, p. 71, of the Report of the Committee on Neuronymy which was adopted by the American Neurological Association June 5, 1896, occurs an error which is unaccountable, but for which I must be held responsible. After the word *epiphysis* comes the date 1895, as if indicating the adoption of that word by the Committee of the Anatomische Gesellschaft in that year. On the contrary, they prefer *corpus pineale*.

The occurrence of this particular error exemplifies the 'irony of fate.' Among the forty terms on the list this is the only one to which my own conversion was recent. For years I used *conarium* without variation. The change was due to four considerations: 1. The arguments of Prof. H. F. Osborn and Dr. E. C. Spitzka. 2. The recognition of the desirability of verbal correlation with the ventral extension, hypophysis ('*corpus pituitarium*') and the other dorsal outgrowth, paraphysis. 3. The fuller appreciation of the force of Dr. W. H. Dall's declaration, "The human mind wearies of too many names and much more readily assimilates a new meaning for an old one."\* 4. The abandonment, or rather relaxation, of one of the requirements of technical terms which was enunciated twenty-five years ago, viz., 'independence of context for signification.'† It is hardly conceivable that any misapprehension should arise from the employment of one and the same word, *epiphysis*, for a part of the brain and for the end of a long bone.

Permit me to express the hope that journals that republished your article may likewise print the corrective portion of this letter, and also to state that the next number of the *Journal of Comparative Neurology* will contain an extended commentary upon the report of the Neurological Association, together with correspondence on the general subject between Prof. W. His and myself.

BURT G. WILDER.

SIASCONSET, MASS., August 3, 1896.

#### THE METRIC SYSTEM.

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: I was much interested in Mr. Stover's query, "Is not the country ripe enough to accept the metric system?" and wish to say that the practical difficulties are probably largely overestimated. Of all peoples those of the United States are the most adaptive, and the change would involve those who are best able to assimilate the new method.

\*From a letter to me. Published as Aphorism xv. in the article 'Anatomical Terminology,' Reference Handbook of the Medical Sciences, VIII., 5:20, 1889.

†'Intermembral Homologies,' Boston Soc. Nat. Hist., Proceedings, XIV., 172, April 5, 1871.

As Greeley proclaimed about 1871, "The way to resume is to resume," so the way to adopt is to adopt. If those from whom the initiative must come would initiate, there would not be much trouble. Let all architects and builders write their dimensions in metric measures, and they will soon find them executed without trouble.

This company manufactures pulleys, etc. A few years ago we established an agency in France and our orders came in metric measures. We simply sent to Chicago for a metric scale and then filled the order. It did not cause any noticeable trouble. It is just as easy for the saw-mill man to cut his lumber according to one measure as the other, and in a short time he would become equally familiar with both systems, and *then* the metric system would be established. The same results would follow through all the trades, but the workman will not use the improvement until he is obliged to.

R. D. D. SMITH.

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#### SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE.

MATHEMATICAL PAPERS READ AT THE INTERNATIONAL MATHEMATICAL CONGRESS HELD IN CONNECTION WITH THE WORLD'S COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION, CHICAGO, 1893.

THE papers presented at the Chicago Mathematical Congress of 1893 have recently been issued in book form by Macmillan & Co., under the suggestive subtitle of Vol. I. of Papers Published by the American Mathematical Society. The papers are edited by the Committee of the Congress, Professors Moore, Bolza and Maschke, of the University of Chicago, and Prof. White, of Northwestern University. The committee were embarrassed at the outset by the fact that no financial provision had been made for the publication, which was finally made possible by the generous subscription of a guarantee fund of one thousand dollars by the Mathematical Society, its members individually and other mathematicians. The handsome volume before us reflects great credit on all concerned in its production.